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ABSTRACT

Those of us who communicate only in English are limited in full exposure to African literary expression. While most creative expression by black Africans is oral, much has also been written in languages foreign to those of us oriented only to English. In the following list, therefore, any efforts to be exhaustive are controlled by the inaccessibility of materials in English, and by economy of time and space. The hope is to stimulate interest in enjoyable reading of materials written by black Africans by suggesting some of the works currently available in the Afro-American collection of the Service Center Branch of the Richmond, California Public Library. This annotated bibliography is divided into fiction, drama, poetry, anthologies, autobiographies, criticism, and phonograph records. The country of origin is denoted for most entries. (Author/SJ)

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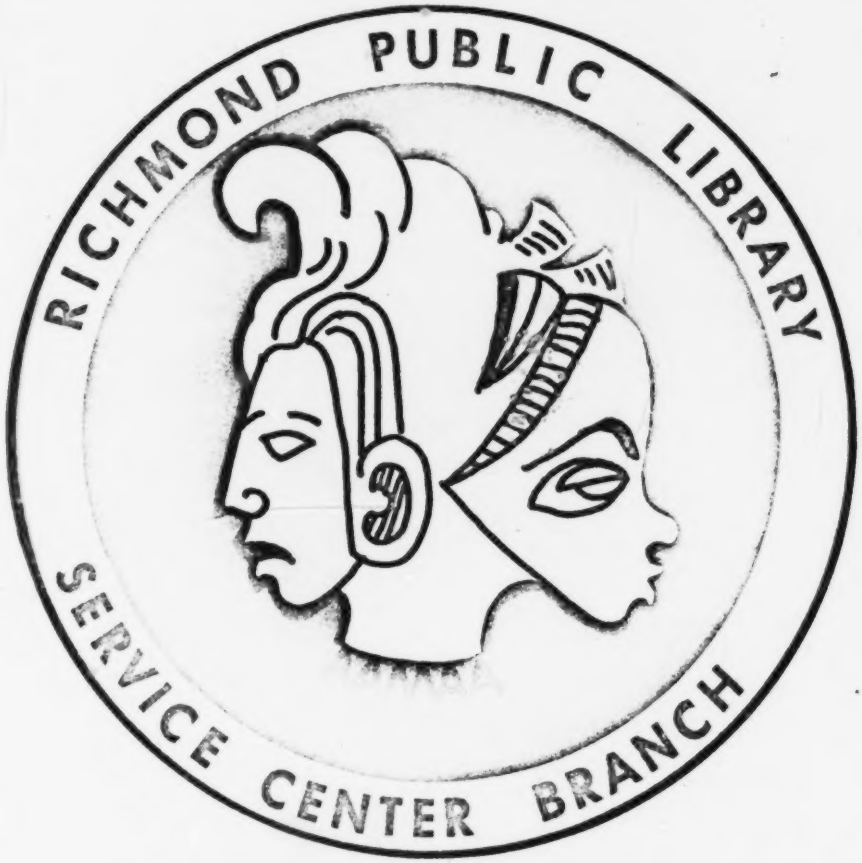

217 10TH ST.

RICHMOND CALIF. 94801

PHONE 237 • 2337

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AFRICA
SPEAKS

INTRODUCTION

Those of us who communicate only in English are limited in full exposure to African literary expression. While most creative expression by black Africans is oral, much has also been written in languages foreign to those of us oriented only to English.

In the following list, therefore, any efforts to be exhaustive are controlled by the inaccessibility of materials in English, and by economy of time and space.

Our hope is to stimulate interest in enjoyable reading of materials written by black Africans by suggesting some of the works currently available in the Afro-American collection of our Library Services and Construction Act Project Library--Service Center Branch--Richmond Public Library.

The ethnic composition of our community designs our program to place special emphasis upon materials for Latin and Afro-American interests. A second listing of materials available from our library in Spanish has also been issued. These materials are free to registered patrons for a three-week loan period, and may be renewed by request.

The Library hours are from 8:00 A.M. to 9:00 P.M., Monday through Thursday; Friday from 8:00 A.M. to 5:00 P.M.; and Saturday from 10:00 A.M. to 2:00 P.M. Phone 415-237-2337.

This list has been prepared by Lucy Wilson, Project Librarian with the assistance of Marilyn Sattler, and Rita Williams Jones, Library Aides, University of California--Berkeley, Work Study Project.

We wish to express our sincere thanks to Collingwood August, Instructor, University of California, Berkeley Extension, and San Francisco Art Institute for his editorial assistance in this second printing. Our Library symbol on the cover was designed by Ben Hazard while an art student at the University of California, Berkeley, and now Professor of Art at the University of Nevada. Art work on the title page was done by our Library Assistant, Meri Henriques.

November, 1969

FICTION

CAMEROONS

MONGO BETI, Pseud., born in 1932 Alexandre Biyidi. Educated in France. Considered one of the most revolutionary writers of our time. Besides the novels listed below he has written two others.

The Poor Christ of Bomba, 1956. A satirical criticism of western religious activities in Africa as revealed through twenty years of service by a French priest, and recorded in the diary of his African house boy.

Mission to Kala, 1957. Although Medza has failed his baccalaureat examination, he becomes the celebrity of Kala where he goes to request the return of his cousin's wife who has fled to her parent's home.

GHANA

AKOSUA ABBS, n.d. a woman writer.

Ashanti Boy, 1959. A development of synthesis rather than conflict between old and new ways of life in an African country.

SAMUEL ASARE KONADU, 1932. Educated in Ghana. Studied journalism in England and France. Has published many short stories. Joined the Ghana News Agency. Resigned in 1963 to research in traditional customs and practices. Established his own publishing firm.

A Woman in her Prime, 1967. A novel of conflict with the tradition of childbirth.

GUINEA

CARAMAE LAYE was born in former Guinea where he spent his first eighteen years. Given a scholarship, he went to France to complete his engineering studies.

The Dark Child, 1953. An autobiographical novel revealing the author's deep attachment to his home and homeland while studying in France.

KENYA

LEONARD KIBERA and SAMUEL KAHIGA, two young brothers well-known on the East African literary scene.

Potent Ash, n.d. Eighteen short stories drawn from the stormy scene during Kenya's terrible emergency.

FICTION

JAMES NGUGI, born in 1938, educated in Kenya and Leeds England, this young author has published in addition to the novels below one play and several short stories.

Weep Not Child, 1964. The Mau Mau uprising keeps the hero from fulfilling the vital role for which his education has prepared him.

The River Between, 1965. There is a contradiction throughout the physical land, and also in the characters as they react to the clash between their culture and religion, and that of the white man.

A Grain of Wheat, 1967. During the Mau Mau revolt in Kenya, Mugo, an escapist, continually shrinks from involvement and finally drifts into cowardice which leads to losing his life for a movement he failed to understand.

MALAWI

LEGSON KAYIRA, born in Malawi and graduated from Livingstonia. Penniless but determined to further his education, he walked 2,500 miles across Africa and eventually arrived in the United States. Was graduated from University of Washington.

Jingald, 1969. Depicts the void created in the life of an old man by his child bride and his son.

NIGERIA

CHINUA ACHEBE, born in Iboland, Nigeria in 1930, began a career in broadcasting in 1954. His four novels have been translated into German, Italian and Spanish.

Things Fall Apart, 1958. Okonkwo faces the personal tragedy of losing face as he is unable to keep tribal unity after the invasion of the white man.

No Longer at Ease, 1960. Obi, grandson of Okonkwo in *Things Fall Apart*, returns from school in England to a promising career in the city which comes to an abrupt and sad end.

Arrow of God, 1964. A village dispute settled by a British officer after the unsuccessful attempt of the village Priest reveals the conflict of the old regime with the new.

A Man of the People, 1960. Corruption and violence in government is revealed in this satire.

ERIC user note*

FICTION

NTIEYONG UDO AKPAN, n.d.

The Wooden Gong, 1965. Village Chief Inman is caught between the contradictory forces of tradition and progress. He equally favors both, while his influence has total respect.

CYPRIAN EKWENSI, born in Kinna, Northern Nigeria in 1921, a man of many careers--teaching, pharmacy, broadcasting. His novels cover many facets of life.

People of the City, 1954. One of the first full-length novels from black Africa which describes fully the problems of modern city life.

Jagua Nana, 1960. Jagua Nana is a middle-aged woman of easy virtue whose main source of livelihood is sex.

Burning Grass, 1963. In a Pastoral setting--depicts the way of life of the cattle herdsmen in Northern Nigeria.

Beautiful Feathers, 1963. Wilson Iyari dreams and works for political unity for his continent while unable to foster unity in his marriage.

Lokotown and other stories, 1966. A collection of short stories.

ONUORA NZEKWU, born in Onitsha, Eastern Nigeria in 1928. Educated in his country. After teaching there, he is now working for the Federal Government.

Wand of Noble Wood, 1961.

Blade Among the Boys, 1962. Both novels deal with the same theme--the conflict of old and new--the first with respect to marriage; the second with respect to religion.

AMOS TUTUOLA, born in 1920. After six years of elementary education and further training as a coppersmith, he began weaving tales that have delighted his own people, and children and adults all over the world. Four novels have been written in addition to the one listed below.

The Palm-Wine Drinkard, 1952. Tells of a drinkard's search for his palm wine tapster and the hardships during the adventure.

* The next four pages were retyped because the paper used in the original document does not reproduce.

FICTION

SIERRA LEONE

ROBERT W. COLE, 1907.

Khossoh Town Boy, 1960. An autobiographical novel. Unusual because it tells of growing up in an African village without anguish or alienation.

WILLIAM CONTON, born in 1925, the author has been an educator since 1947. In addition to the following novel, he has published a two-volume study of West African history.

The African, 1960. An autobiographical novel of a student revealing what it is like to grow up in French Africa.

SOUTH AFRICA

PETER ABRAHAMS, 1919. In addition to the novels listed below, he has written three others, many short stories and an autobiography. Has been away from South Africa for more than twenty years. He now lives in Jamaica.

A Wreath for Udomo, 1956. Michael Udomo desires political independence for Africa. The resolution of problems becomes the action as he strives for a concrete future in which he believes.

A Night of Their Own, 1965. An emergency situation is created in which characters, symbolic of their political beliefs traverse a night of their own with varied consequences.

BESSIE HEAD, 1937. Born in Pietermaritzburg, her parents are unknown to her. Placed in a missionary orphanage from a welfare organization at 13, she was trained as a primary school teacher. She has taught and worked as a journalist for Drum, an English language African Magazine. She now lives in exile in Botswana where she is a school teacher.

When Rain Clouds Gather, 1968. Facing the challenge of developing a new nation--Botswana--the villagers explore their resources.

EZEKIEL MPHAHLELE, born in 1919 in South Africa. He is a creative writer and critic. Taught in Johannesburg, University of Colorado in Denver, and is now teaching in Zambia, Nigeria. He worked for many years on Drum magazine.

in corner b, 1967. A collection of twelve short stories. The last, Mrs. Plum, "is one of the most damning and bitter indictments of the white 'liberals' in South Africa yet printed".

DRAMA

GHANA

* EDUFA by Efua T. Sutherland. An affluent African unable to accept the reality of his wife's illness and death, blames himself for mis-use of charms. The author is one of the few African women writers.

* THE LITERARY SOCIETY by Henry Ofori. A delightful satire on how the literate folk in an interior community run a social and literary club.

NIGERIA

** A DANCE OF THE FORESTS by Wole Soyinka. A complex play dealing with the belief in the powers of dead over living and the theory of reincarnation. The author is the most outstanding among Nigerian poet-dramatists.

* THE JEWELS OF THE SHRINE by James Ene Henshaw. In this one-act play a grandfather tricks his grandsons into giving him an honorable burial by having them believe he has valuable hidden jewels.

** THE LION AND THE JEWEL by Wole Soyinka. A comedy of conflict emphasizing the influence of tradition on the people.

** MOREMI by Duro Ladipo. Adapted from Samuel Johnson's History of the Yorubas, Moremi buys peace for her village by sacrificing her only son to the god.

** THE SCHEME by Wale Ogunyemi. Based on an incident that happened during the author's childhood which reveals that power without responsibility is a dangerous force. The author is a well-known actor in Nigeria.

* SONG OF A GOAT by John Pepper Clark. A tragedy based on an Ijaw custom of giving a wife to another brother if the first brother proves inadequate. The author is considered by many critics as one of the major contemporary poets writing in English today.

** THE STRONG BREED by Wole Soyinka. Based on the tradition of "scape-goating" one person, usually a lunatic stranger to carry the troubles of the whole community. The troubles are believed to leave when the person is driven into the bush never to return.

DRAMA

** THE SWAMP DWELLERS by Wole Soyinka. This plays reveals the frustrations of too great an emotional attachment to irrational beliefs. This play has been filmed and portrays aspects of Yoruba traditions.

** THE TRIALS OF BROTHER JERO by Wole Soyinka. A light-hearted satirical comedy on the way of life of certain religious sects in Nigeria.

SOUTH AFRICA

* RHYTHM OF VIOLENCE by Lewis Nkosi. Students react to political and social injuries in this play by an angry young dramatist now exiled in London.

* THE RAINKILLERS by Alfred Hutchinson. Conflict of old and new Africa is revealed as a Protestant minister and an African doctor struggle to convince villagers of their powers to bring rain. Author is exiled in England.

* In--Plays from black Africa, edited by Fredric M. Litto, 1968.
** In--Five Plays, by Wole Soyinka, 1964.
*** In--Three Nigerian Plays, with introductions by Ulli Beier, 1967.

POETRY

Drum beat, East African poems, 1967, chosen by Lennard Okala.
"Includes writers of non-East African, indeed non-African origin, because the critical eye of an outsider often notices details an indigenous writer may not see."

Modern poetry from Africa, 1963. Edited by Gerald Moore and Ulli Beier.
The poems here are classified as "modern" in the sense that they represent a fresh exploration of language. The authors have confined their selections to black writers. Biographical notes are given.

Poems from black Africa, 1963. Edited by Langston Hughes with biographical notes.
"Perhaps it is more important to know how people feel than how they think--the poetry of Africa indicates its emotional climate."

West African Verse, 1967. Chosen and annotated by Donatus Ibe Nivoga.
Collected to help African students appreciate poetry using works from African poets. Selections include many poems not previously published in anthologies. Has biographical notes.

ETC.

ANTHOLOGIES

Ulli Beier, ed.
Black Orpheus: An anthology of new African and Afro-American stories. 1965.

David Cook, ed.
Origin East Africa: A Makererei anthology. (African writers' series, no. 15), 1965.

Langston Hughes, ed.
African treasury; Articles, essays, stories, poems by black Africans, 1960.

Ezekiel Mphahlele
Modern African Stories, 1964. Edited with Ellis Komey. Presents the newest of modern African writing.
African writing today. 1967. An anthology giving themes and styles of black African writing in English.

Peggy Rutherford, ed.
African voices, 1960.
This editor hopes this collection will "give the lie to that idea. . . that Africa is incapable of producing any creative art."

AUTOBIOGRAPHIES

GHANA

Kwame Nkrumah, 1909.
Ghana, the autobiography of Kwame Nkrumah, 1957.

KENYA

R. Mugo Gatheru, 1925.
Child of two worlds, a Kikuyu's story. 1966.

Josiah Mwangi Kariuki, 1929.
Mau Mau detainee; the account by a Kenya African of his experiences in detention camps, 1953-1960. 1963.

SOUTH AFRICA

Peter Abrahams, 1919.
Tell Freedom. 1954.

Alfred Hutchinson, 1932.
Road to Ghana.

Bloke Modisane, 1923.
Blame me on history.

Ezekiel Mphahlele, 1919.
Down second avenue, 1959.

CRITICISM

Wilfred Cartey, 1931.

Whispers from a continent: The literature of contemporary black Africa, 1968.

Janheinz Jahn

Neo-African literature translated from the German by Oliver Coburn and Ursula Lehrburger.

The author attempts to relate the origins of black writing–both in U.S. and elsewhere–to African tradition.

Ezekiel Mphahlele, 1919.

African image, 1962.

Oladele Taiwo

An Introduction to West African literature, 1967.

Gives background information and examines major literary forms and ideas, and four selected works.

etc. etc. etc.

Barbara Abrash

Black African literature in English since 1952, 1967.

A bibliography of works and criticism.

East African cultural heritage. (Contemporary African monographs series no. 4) Essays concerning cultural identity.

Jomo Kenyatta

The grandson of a Gikuyu medicine man, a foremost leader of African nationalism. Studied at the London School of Economics acquiring his degree in Anthropology. He is now President of Kenya.

Facing Mount Kenya, 1962. "An invaluable key to the structure of African society and the nature of the African mind."

Wolf Leslau.

Falasha anthology–The black Jews of Ethiopia. 1941.

Through this work for the first time the English reader can acquaint himself with the life and literature of the Falasha.

Wulf Sachs

Black anger, 1947. Story of an African medicine man, told by an European medicine man (doctor).

RECORDS

Afro-American – CMS 547; CMS 550

African folk tales, Vol. 1 & 2

A collection of African folk tales told by Bertha Parker, an accomplished black story teller from the New York Public Library.

Caedmon – TC 1267

Folk tales of the tribes of Africa, told by Eartha Kitt.

"The realism, the insistent emphasis upon man in all his moods, the emphasis upon the contemporary scene, and the high degree of sophistication pervading in African oral literature is present in this record."

Columbia – CS 8666

Olatunji's flaming drums! Arranged and conducted by Ned Karlin.

Olatunji and his group give a brilliant performance of drumming and vocal renditions. Six numbers here vary in duration from three to ten minutes.

Counterpoint – CPT 513

African tribal music and dances.

A variety of rhythms and dialects concerning traditional affairs, feasts, hunting and canoeing "wars", incantations, human sacrifices, and some love songs. Each selection calls for a ritualistic dance except for the boat song.

Folkways – FE 4441

Drums of the Yoruba of Nigeria, recorded by William Bascom.

Recorded in the kingdoms of Ife and Ojo. Drums are the principal musical instrument used by the Yorubas, together with trumpets, whistles, violins, several types of gongs, and a variety of gourds or calabash rattles, and hand clapping.

Folkways – FW 8852

West African music.

Recorded on location by Laura C. Boulton on the Straus West African expedition of the Field Museum of Natural History. Taureg, Bakwiri, Kru, and Bini traditional music from French Sudan, Southern Nigeria, and former British Cameroons.

RECORDS

Folkways – FC 7150

Ashanti – Folk tales from Ghana

Six folk-tales from Ghana, narrated by Harold Coulander, considered a specialist on African and Afro-American culture.

Ocora – 29

Nomades Du Niger

This recording was collected among the Tuareg of Muslim faith, living in the Aïr of Niger, and tells about their lives.

Ocora – 44

Ethiopie polyphonres et techniques vocales

A presentation of fourteen examples of vocal polyphony and techniques of voice production. Side A is devoted to polyphony and Side B to vocal techniques. The record jacket has meaningful photographs of Ethiopians.

Philips – PCC 606

Missa Luba sung by les troubadours du roi baudouin.

A mass sung in Congolese style. A beautiful example of cross cultural influence.

Reprise – RS6310

Makeba!

With a breath of liberation, Miriam Makeba sings about Africa. The range of material, ideas, and vocal treatment is fantastic, yet integrated. Here Makeba is working on a purely African environment.

Request – RLP 8039

Songs of the Guiana Jungle.

From Guyana comes this unusual collection of folk music. Work, play, and love. Songs of the Kwe Kwe comprise the bulk of authentic Guyana music.

Roulette – SR 9001

Songs of new nations–Ghana, Nigeria, Congo, Kenya.

The De Paur chorus with native drums and percussion.

World foreign language record series – 2972

Swahili

A manual on conversational Swahili. The manual and the records explain the simple phonetic system and conventional spelling of the language.